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BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY,

REV. J. J. O'CARROLL, S. J.

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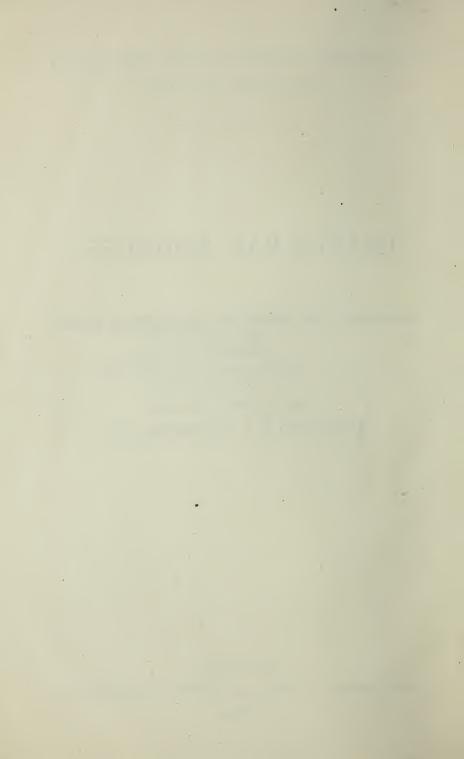
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TO

THE MEMORY

OF

JAMES ARTHUR DEASE,

HIS VIRTUES,

HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS,

AND

HIS AFFECTION,

THIS SLIGHT WORK

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AN ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

Year after year we keep the annual opening of our debate, by speaking about eloquence. We generally take this word in its widest sense, and let it embrace in its significance all good rhetoric and oratory. But to-night, I wish to direct your attention to a narrower meaning of that well-known word, a sense in which it is, I believe, strictly and even commonly used without awaking any general observation.

I cannot but think, that, while we are often satisfied to let the word Eloquence stand for good public speaking in a general way, still, when we are strongly moved, when we use the word Eloquence as the one appropriate word to express one deep idea, we always mean something very different from what is expressed by "Oratory." An example will set best before you what I mean. You will allow me to take one with which many of us are probably already not unfamiliar.

When Sir Walter Scott makes a poor country girl meet the Queen of England, and implore of her to obtain a sister's pardon, the great writer puts touching words into the untaught woman's mouth, and makes the sovereign's first answer to the appeal, consist of three simple words, that seem almost wrested from her: "This is eloquence." Those few words are indeed well chosen. They express at once the sense intended to be conveyed, and which we see more fully, but not more clearly, from the context; that Queen Caroline is softened, overcome, won over; that she finds a glory in yielding to the petition; that she will do her best to save the life recommended to her, and to console the heart that has poured forth its appeal. This is what Sir Walter Scott meant to make us understand, and he succeeded at once in doing so; for Sir Walter knew the value of words well, and he chose here carefully "Eloquence."

But if, on the contrary, he had made the royal lady exclaim, after hearing the poor petitioner to the close, instead of "This is eloquence," either "This is oratory," or, still worse, "This is rhetoric," we should not have felt satisfied

that the sovereign had done more than admire her subject's speech. A person who did no more, might certainly say after the suppliant's long prayer, that it had been truly oratory; this would mean only, that it had ably put forward grounds for granting the request, that the cause would not fail for want of a good advocate. Just so much would here suit well the word Oratory. Even if the answerer believed that there had been no deep feeling in the petition, that the piece had been cleverly prepared, and that it might be well to hint as much, the answerer might well use the words, "This is oratory." This latter sense would beyond question be understood, if the words "This is rhetoric" were here ascribed. For the main idea connected with rhetoric, is that of careful training in the art of using words. With the word Oratory, the sense would have been ambiguous. That word does not necessarily imply special preparation, its main sense is able advocacy; but its use, in our case, would certainly have signified, not that the listener had been touched, and softened, and overcome, but that, with thorough self-command, she weighed intellectually and duly estimated whatever had been said. This points to a real difference in meaning, of kind, not simply of degree.

But Scott, who wished to represent something different from this, put into the queen's mouth the warmer exclamation "This is eloquence." A person unmoved by the poor Scotchwoman's prayer, or struggling to repress an inclination to yield to it, would not have used such words. The word Eloquence is never used as Rhetoric often, and Oratory sometimes, is—ungraciously. Using it as Queen Caroline does, signifies that she feels that she has been deeply and worthily touched, and that, so far as might and right allow her, she will aid her suppliant. So great was the meaning Scott desired to con-

vey, and he rightly chose his word.

It is clear, Gentlemen, even from this example alone, that Eloquence, though sometimes a word used for Oratory, has, nevertheless, one peculiar meaning, for which it and Oratory cannot be interchanged. What, then, is that peculiar sense of this great word? I answer, it is this: Eloquence signifies, not merely ability in the speaker, but also a worthy power in his Therefore it is, Gentlemen, that it can never be used ungraciously. It points out always something good. In its true, strict sense, it signifies, I am satisfied, the power of enkindling the nobler feelings of the soul, the power of arousing the sense of moral right, and virtue, and honour, with the sublime and exulting joy, the lofty pride, which the soul must take in what is good and great, when that is set clearly before man's inward spiritual vision. The appeal of Eloquence is the appeal which carries its point by enlisting the feelings of magnanimity upon its side. The appeal of Oratory may be made in a thousand other ways. It is only when made in the manner

just mentioned, that the Oratory deserves, in the strict, true sense, the name of Eloquence. Oratory is assuredly not the same as Eloquence. There are many orations which cannot be termed eloquent, and yet must be acknowledged to be most able and telling speeches. There are many isolated passages, which are described no-how so well as by the word Eloquent, and which do not belong to Oratory. It were not difficult, I believe, to name men who were great orators, and not at all eloquent, and men who were but poor orators, yet eloquent to a high degree. Oratory is the power of persuading great masses of men. Eloquence is the power of making the

soul exult in the idea of virtue and moral good.

Eloquence is indeed the true, appropriate ornament, and support, and glory of Oratory. For the aim of Oratory is to rouse to determination, somehow or other; and Eloquence tends to form resolution of the highest nature, that which springs from the motives which enkindle heroism. But while it is thus true that Eloquence is especially connected with Oratory, it is also true that it is found where Oratory is not, where no direct appeal is made to excite to a resolve—where a poet, for instance, is engaged merely in a description. When the describer touches strongly the loftier and more spiritual feelings of the soul; when he treats, movingly, not of the brilliant array of great and disciplined armies, not of the magnificence of capitals, not of the still more majestic and far lovelier beauties of a glorious landscape, but of something whose attraction is not for the outer eye, of the calm grandeur of a noble mind amidst misfortune, of the fidelity of a true friend amid disgrace, of the unshaken valour of some forlorn and utterly abandoned garrison, we feel that there is in the poetry something that is not usually its own, and that the bard has risen to the height of Eloquence.

It is in this way I understand the fine words so often quoted, and ascribed to Burke, with regard to one of Sheridan's speeches against Hastings: "Every species of composition from Poetry up to Eloquence." For as Eloquence is, I maintain, the name of that power in words, which affects those higherfeelings whose foundation is beyond sense; so is Poetry the power which affects those lower, but still fine feelings of taste, which may be said to have their first deep foundation in the senses. Poetry, as its very name implies, is nothing else than a representation so vivid, that, without attention to truth or to connection with other things, it, by its very vividness, arrests our attention, and forces our mind to pause and dwell uponit with admiration and delight. But Eloquence is no representation, no setting before us of bright images of such things as our senses have learned to know. Eloquence, Cicero's "Sapientia copiose loquens," is Wisdom, speaking with words which enkindle a love for the true, the lofty, the heroic;

Wisdom, not prudence, not knowledge, but "Sapientia," that splendid, sublime, and noble Wisdom which is so far above the regions where "Prudentia" and "Scientia" are found, and which is set before the mind to be loved and hankered after for its own proud sake, with a magnanimous and eager joy.

But you will ask me, Gentlemen, what authority I have to offer, for the view I am taking of Eloquence. You will very properly observe that new views on such a subject as this, are scarcely likely to be correct; that though, when a matter is new, we may naturally expect in it discoveries, when a subject has been handled for so many ages, by so many great masters, as has been the case with Eloquence, it appears presumptuous and idle to seek in it for anything really new; that if the doctrine I am maintaining has not the authority of some distinguished name to support it, it can scarcely deserve to be received. Gentlemen, I am happy to say that I completely agree with you. Your sentiments on this point are thoroughly my own. If I found my views on this matter very singular, I should be strongly inclined to think that they were very wrong. Let us see, then, Gentlemen, what some received authority has said upon this subject.

I believe, Gentlemen, to try this case, we could not select a better authority than Blair. That remarkable man was so judicious and so calm a critic, so free from all rashness and love of singularity, that if we find him supporting the view I set forth, we need none of us be ashamed to maintain it in our turn. Well, Gentlemen, let us examine Blair, and see

what he tells us with regard to Eloquence.

I give you notice that we shall have to examine the Scottish doctor pretty thoroughly, to bring him to admit all that we want. He will probably appear at first, to be saying something very different. I believe many have read him without deducing from him the conclusion I want to draw. But I trust that, with a little patience, I shall be able to make you see that what I have said about Eloquence is really maintained by Blair. In fact, if the thing is true at all, it must be, in some form or other, in Blair. If true at all, it must be a rather patent and fundamental truth in its own way; and such a truth on such a subject, Blair, who wrote so much about Eloquence with real ability, cannot be supposed to have kept clear of everywhere.

Blair, when he begins to speak regularly of Eloquence, certainly does not commence in a manner that ought to give us much encouragement. We want to restrict the meaning of the word Eloquence. We say it is not Rhetoric, it is not Oratory. Blair commences by saying that it is Rhetoric, that it is Oratory, and, moreover, that it is something else besides.

Treating of Eloquence, he divides it into three kinds. "The first and lowest," he says, "is that which aims only

at pleasing the hearers. Such, generally, is the Eloquence of panegyrics, inaugural orations, addresses to great men, and other harangues of this sort."

This, Gentlemen, is clearly what we term Rhetoric.

"A second and higher degree of Eloquence," says Blair, is when the speaker aims, not merely to please, but also to inform, to instruct, to convince."

This is no less clearly what we are accustomed to call

Oratory.

Blair continues:

"But there is a third, and still higher, degree of elo-

quence.'

And about this third kind of Eloquence the Scottish doctor begins to grow very enthusiastic; he calls it for some time high Eloquence, and finally, not satisfied with this praise, virtually admits that this third kind of Eloquence is the only kind of Eloquence that exists; for he roundly declares that he who has it not, can never be called eloquent. Here is a turning of the tables, a change of front, indeed! But let us listen to the doctor's words.

"I am here," he says, "to observe, and the observation is of consequence, that the high Eloquence which I have last

mentioned is always the offspring of passion."

A little farther on:

"This principle being once admitted, that all high Eloquence flows from passion, several consequences follow, which deserve to be attended to."

And then, warming with his subject, as he speaks of warmth, of passion,—Blair himself grows at last bold, if not impassioned, and adds, among other consequences, the following:

"Hence to call a man cold is the same thing as to say

that he is not eloquent."

There, Gentlemen, is an end indeed to Dr. Blair's three kinds of Eloquence. The third kind was, according to him, the offspring of passion; and now, if a man has not the third kind, if he is cold, according to the same Dr. Blair, in the same lecture, he has not Eloquence, he is not eloquent at all. The first kind of Eloquence, the Eloquence of panegyrics and addresses to great men, which is assuredly not the offspring of passion, will not make him eloquent, it is no longer to be looked on as Eloquence at all; neither will the second kind of Eloquence do, the Oratory which not only pleases but informs, instructs, convinces; for this too is no offspring of the passions, and Dr. Blair will now admit nothing as eloquent, save what belongs to his third degree of Eloquence. Why is there this sudden and extraordinary change, in the language and very definitions of the doctor? I know well why. It is because Dr. Blair, at Edinburgh a hundred years ago, spoke, on the whole, the same English language which we all speak

here in the nineteenth century; because he, like us, felt that the word Eloquence was taken in two senses, that it might be used loosely, to embrace all Rhetoric and Oratory; but that it had, too, a special, otherwise restricted, sense of its own, the sense in which it is used when enthusiasm is kindled at its name.

But, Gentlemen, you will warn me that I am running on too fast. You will tell me that I have no reason, as yet, to suppose that Dr. Blair understands Eloquence precisely as I do myself. You will say that it is clear that Dr. Blair took Eloquence in two senses, but that it is by no means proved as yet, that his second and peculiar sense is the same as mine; on the contrary, you will observe that he speaks of it as the offspring of the passions simply, while I expressly maintain that it belongs only to those passions and feelings which are

great and noble.

Gentlemen, you are very right, and I bow to your correction. I have indeed still to prove that Dr. Blair, who calls his High Eloquence simply the offspring of the passions, really believes that it is the offspring only of the noble ones. And, to tell you the truth, I despair of gaining any further admissions from our doctor's first lecture upon Eloquence. Perhaps some one of you may be more fortunate. Perhaps I have not sufficiently ransacked this lecture. But I abandon the hope of eliciting any further confession from the doctor, here. He clearly admits the use of the word "Eloquence" in two senses; in the second, high sense, he regards what it expresses as an offspring of the passions. No examination or cross-examination of mine, has been able to force anything further for my purpose, out of Dr. Blair's first lecture upon Eloquence.

But, Gentlemen, we have another piece of evidence. Dr. Blair did not merely deliver lectures upon Eloquence. He also delivered one upon the Means of improving in Eloquence. And, Gentlemen, in this later lecture, the learned doctor lets

the whole truth out.

He here observes that there is a "consideration" of "importance," concerning which he is "not sure of its being attended to as much as it deserves, namely, that from the fountain of real and genuine virtue are drawn those sentiments which will ever be most powerful in affecting the hearts of others. Bad as the world is, nothing has so great and universal a command over the minds of men as virtue. No kind of language is so generally understood, and so powerfully felt, as the native language of worthy and virtuous feelings. He only, therefore, who possesses these full and strong, can speak properly and in its own language, to the heart. On all great subjects and occasions there is a dignity, there is an energy, in noble sentiments, which is overcoming and irresistible. They give an ardour and a flame to one's discourse

which seldom fails to kindle a like flame in those who hear and which, more than any other cause, bestows on eloquence that power for which it is famed, of seizing and transporting an audience."

Gentlemen, I ask you, where are the unworthy passions now? Like Rhetoric, like Oratory, Dr. Blair has eliminated them too in their turn, and there remain for Eloquence now only the noble passions, the good and lofty feelings of the soul. Dr. Blair took some time indeed to work out his elimination. It was only completed, as you have seen, in a later lecture. But he has done the work—he has done it very thoroughly; and I can repeat, with all the authority due to his distinguished name, that Eloquence, in the strict, true sense of the word, is the rousing, by language, of man's

generous aspirations.

If it were in any sense necessary, I believe I could show you, Gentlemen, that DeQuincey, who follows Blair in calling Eloquence the language of the passions, follows him also in regarding it, in reality, as the language which powerfully sets forth moral dignity. This doctrine is surely true. No matter how magnificently the passion of hate, for instance, is expressed, so long as what is expressed is purely hate, the expression never can be eloquent. There may, indeed, gleam forth in the very declaration of hate itself, the tokens of something besides it, something nobler than it can be, something, perhaps fatally, madly, servilely, mixed up with it, but something which is not it. The man who speaks the language of hate, may also speak the language of resolution; and then, certainly not because of the language of hate, but certainly because of the language of resolution, he certainly will speak the language of Eloquence. surely Eloquence, for man to say, he will be constant unto death. But when he declares he hates, if he expresses no other sentiment than hate, no matter how beautifully, how splendidly, apart from other sentiment, he may signify his rage, his speech may be astounding, thrilling, awful, poetical, but it will not be eloquent. It may have a beauty of its own, but not that magic and ennobling beauty which makes the generous heart throb faster, and feel an exquisite and proud satisfaction as it beats. No man will feel himself urged to call its hard, and stately, and dreadful, perhaps even overwhelming splendour, by the touching and gladdening name of Eloquence. As it is with the passion of hate, so is it with every other that is not noble. Eloquence is not the mere language of passion. It is the language of noble passion, the lively language of virtue, "Sapientia copiose loquens;" the just expression of moral grandeur. When the grandeur set before us is not moral grandeur, the image presented may be brilliant, may be sublime, but not with the brilliancy or

sublimity of Eloquence. The power of Eloquence is the power of making the soul exult in the idea of virtue and moral

good. Precisely where that is, there is Eloquence.

Blair was indeed right in saying, that such a consideration as this, appears not sufficiently attended to. But upon you, Gentlemen, I trust it will not be thrown away. Amongst you, as far as my feeble judgment allows me to speak, I can say unhesitatingly that the noble germ of true Eloquence is to be found. I believe, indeed, that it is far more general than is commonly supposed. I trust you will not suffer it to pine away for want of cultivation here. I trust you will strive steadily to develop what power you have, of speaking the manly and ennobling language which often rises to your lips, warm with the consciousness of right and honour. I trust that you will look on this great power, as most truly the highest ornament of Oratory, and the mightiest instrument of persuasion vouchsafed to man. I trust that you will feel that it becomes you to study to develop this power in yourselves. The natural gift of Eloquence is, as I have already said, in my opinion, very general. It is often to be detected in a sentence, sometimes in a word. It may be found in the untutored prayer, with which a grateful beggar calls down a blessing on a benefactor. But it is a work of labour and of art indeed, to make it pervade a long composition, dealing with facts and reasonings, with distinctions and objections, and to make it so hallow and ennoble the whole speech, that praise becomes due, like that which Cicero bestowed on Demosthenes' great Oration on the Crown,—that the wonderful composition, ably addressed as it is to a busy and strangely mingled public, breathes nevertheless throughout, the spirit of a magnanimous and sublime philosophy. To deserve such praise as this, is indeed, I repeat, a work of much labour and art, requiring much patient and careful study. But I trust that study will, in many cases here, be cheerfully bestowed upon the work. I believe the natural gifts are at hand, and there is only required further a quiet, persevering, energetic, will.

But, Gentlemen, it is not merely as speakers that I have to treat with you to-night. I have to address you as critics, too. And as critics, no less than as orators, I think you have much to gain from a due consideration of the point on which I have been dwelling, the point to which, in Dr. Blair's opinion, sufficient attention has not been paid. You have seen, Gentlemen, that we have regarded Eloquence, in the first instance, rather as a sort of material to be employed in composition than as one definite form of composition itself. We have contemplated its being employed where there was no Oratory, in a history to some extent, for instance, or in a poem: nay more, we have even recognised it where there could scarcely be said to be any composition; almost, if I

may borrow an analogy from our chemistry, as a free element. and existing sometimes in quantities no greater than a molecule. To tell the truth, Gentlemen, this is rather a chemical view to take in criticism, this manner of analysing the æsthetic nature of the very materials that go to make up a composition, rather than sketching the general form, which the composition as a whole presents. But, Gentlemen, provided the latter grand and comprehensive kind of criticism be not abandoned, as it certainly never will, I think the secondary, more material, more analytical kind of criticism, may very advantageously be superadded and developed, far more than has hitherto been done. The study of the great forms things take, is grander than the study of their elements. As History is above Antiquities, as Descriptive is above Experimental Science, so in Criticism, must the acquaintance with a great composition, as a whole, rank higher than the minute investigation of its elements. It is no wonder that attention has hitherto been chiefly paid to the nobler and more descriptive kind of Criticism. Even in the material world, it is only within the past century that Chemistry has been added to the list of sciences; it is not surprising that minute analytical investigation in Criticism, should as yet be almost wholly without method. But though the world got on very well without Chemistry for centuries, it certainly gained something when that science at last was introduced. And provided the literary world loses nothing of what it already has acquired, I believe it will gain considerably, by developing, to some extent, regular analytical investigation into the very elements, the very molecules and atoms of all literary composition. If we are careful never to lose sight of poems and histories and orations, as great forms of composition, which in their complex unity have real nature and definite power of their own, we shall lose nothing, but, on the contrary, understand them all the better, if we note at the same time carefully, that one poem embraces in itself, for instance, many elements whose charm is that of Eloquence, not Poetry, while a second is rich in the beauties of History, and a third in its minutest parts has no ornament except those immediately belonging to Poetry itself. Noting such things as these, how much one history for instance makes use of the elements of Poetry and another of those of Eloquence to recommend it, how poetical one speech is in its vivid picturings, how eloquent another, and so on, we need not lose sight of the final effect produced by the whole, but, keeping it steadily before our view, we may come to know the whole more thoroughly.

No doubt it is necessary that the elements should be distinguished, not arbitrarily, but by each one of them really having, like Eloquence, a definite and peculiar æsthetic value; but I

do not believe that it would be difficult to form a proper division of this kind. Once there is question of æsthetic value, once we pass beyond mere information of the mind, and seek to present forms, to submit ideas to it, in a manner that of its own nature shall delight æsthetically; not of course because the notions may be new, which is the chance and transient pleasure of news; not because the notions may be odd, that is, naturally unexpected, and therefore, if I may venture to say so, naturally to ordinary minds new, wherein consists the tolerated half-despised pleasure of humour in all its branches, from wit to the grotesque; once we pass beyond these lowly pleasures, whose foundation is Curiosity, and seek to put ideas before the mind which shall powerfully and intellectually delight;—we find surely that we can do so only in one of four ways, with which the world is already well acquainted. If there is something that adds value to an idea beyond the mere information it conveys, or the interest of curiosity it excites, that value must consist either in association of its knowledge or in power of impressing; the value must arise from bringing other ideas to bear on it, and by their connection and intimate union with it, extending its original comprehension; or by setting forth vividly the charms which that idea itself can have for man, by showing the sublime or beautiful that dwells within it. Now the value of connection may arise in two well-known ways, and that of intrinsic charm in two ways also. The connection may be necessary, or in other words philosophical, and accidental, or in other words historical. In this way we have the philosophical and historical elements of delight for the intellect. The intrinsic charm may be founded in representation of what affects the senses, and so be poetic; or else in what transcends them and is Eloquence. We should thus have above the attractions of curiosity the four great elements of philosophical, historical, poetic, and eloquent delight. this is a subject which I must not pause to develop now. desire at present merely to point out in a general way to you, that a minute criticism of the very elements of composition is perfectly possible, and would be surely not uninteresting to one who pursued it in his reading.

Before concluding, Gentlemen, I wish to submit to you at some length, a striking illustration of much that I have said to-night; an example that sets strongly before our eyes, how much Eloquence may do, how widely it may be spread, in what different kinds of writing it may be found, how clearly it may belong to one who on the whole, as an author, is of no great fame; in fine, when found, how carefully, with what precision, if I may use the term, it may be worked in, to suit the composition of which it is to be a part.

You remember, Gentlemen, the panegyric on Cardinal

Wolsey which Shakspeare, in the solemn and touching play of King Henry VIII., makes Griffith pronounce, in answer to Queen Catherine. It is certainly one of the peculiarly great passages, in the works of the great English dramatist. The whole dialogue in which it occurs, is declared by Dr. Johnson to be above any other part of Shakspeare's tragedies, and perhaps above any scene of any other poet. That whole dialogue is unquestionably magnificent. And in that magnificent production of genius, the wonderful author himself ascribes a special and striking power to this one passage. speech, a little bit of Oratory, a defence of the fallen and dead Cardinal, addressed to the divorced and dying Queen, who complained of him on many grounds. And Shakspeare makes this difficult and hazardous speech successful, he makes it so from the *Eloquence* that is in it, from its power of rousing pure and generous and noble feeling, or, to use his own words, put into the mouth of Catherine,

"With thy religious truth and modesty."

Shakspeare makes this speech, this piece of *Eloquence*, this magnanimous appeal, play the great part in his grand dialogue. He makes it produce one of the most extraordinary of effects. He makes it suddenly win over to a fallen foe, admiration and forgiveness on the part of an embittered and injured sovereign, in the very hour of the last agony of death.

Whom I most hated living thou hast made me, With thy religious truth and modesty, Now in his ashes honour. Peace be with him!

Thus, therefore, Gentlemen, the mighty poet, who of all men knew best how to estimate the influence of words on the character and hearts of men, shows us that he himselfjudged, there was no improbability in supposing the eloquence of this little speech of Griffith, sufficient to produce the extraordinary change set before us, in the disposition of the dying Catherine. This is a high judgment indeed, in favour of the power of Eloquence, and of the Eloquence of this one passage.

And this high judgment beyond question is correct. Appeal from Shakspeare to his critics if you will! They will tell you that they find the development of Queen Catherine's last thoughts most natural; pathetic and sublime, no doubt, but above all gentle and natural. See how the quotation from Dr. Johnson on this point concludes. This great scene "is tender and pathetic, without gods or furies or poisons or precipices, without the help of romantic circumstances, without improbable sallies;" Gentlemen, note these words: "without improbable sallies of poetical lamentation, and without any throes of tumultuous misery."

Perhaps some might prefer a more practical critic to Dr. Johnson. It will be easy here, to satisfy even such unreason-

able gentlemen. For Mrs. Siddons agreed thoroughly with Dr. Johnson, in looking on the whole character of Queen Catherine in Henry VIII., not only as not improbable, not only as natural, but as the most natural of all Shakspeare's female characters. Now, Gentlemen, that a dialogue in which such a change of feeling as Queen Catherine's takes place, should charm especially by its natural simplicity, shows that the power which calls forth the change appears fully adequate to the effect, and must be great indeed. That power in this scene, where there are no gods or furies, and, what is more, no improbable sallies of poetical lamentation, that great and adequate power is, wholly in the Eloquence of the speech of Griffith.

You will tell me, that such Eloquence is to be found only in the works of Shakspeare, or some other whose name, like his, is one of the glories of the world of letters. Gentlemen, I shall here at last be obliged reluctantly to differ with you. I have been agreeing with you all along till now. But here I cannot do so. This magnificent passage before us, its sentiments and even its very words, are found in a work, little noticed, whose author is mainly known by having early died a very glorious death, the death of a traitor under Queen Elizabeth,* years upon years before William Shakspeare, living in peace under King James, published to the world the great work of his mature age, his play of Henry VIII. The character which Shakspeare there gives of Wolsey, is given by Father Edmund Campion, in his little History of Ireland, written before he became a Jesuit. It is given, where he describes a scene before the Privy Council in London, which must have for us a special interest.

This neighbourhood has had lately cause to lament the death of a great nobleman, to whose courtesy we have often been indebted. We know how the history of his ancestors was entwined with the general history of our country. We know of the hard struggles the Earls of Kildare went through, to maintain that high position which their race has held, through so many centuries in Ireland. It was as Edmund Campion was describing the bold address of one of the great Earls at a Privy Council where Wolsey sat, as he was describing its effect on the English lords who listened, that he paused for a moment in his narrative, to depict the prelate abhorred by all the noblemen, in those very colours which Shakspeare has made so successfully his own. Campion wrote as follows:

"They all hated the Cardinall. A man undoubtedly born to honour, I thinke some Prince's—no butcher's sonne, exceeding wise, faire spoken, high-minded, full of revenge, vicious of his body, lofty to his enemies, were they never so

^{*}Father Campion was executed in 1581, when Shakspeare was in his teens.

bigge, to those that accepted and sought his friendship wonderful courteous, a rype schooleman, thrall to affections, brought a bed with flattery, insatiable to get and more princelike in bestowing; as appeareth by his two Colledges at Ipswich and at Oxenford, th' one suppressed with his fall, th' other unfinished and yet as it lieth an house of students (considering all appurtenances) incomparable through Christendome, whereof Henry the Eighth is now called founder, because hee let it stand. He held and enjoyed at once the Bishopricks of Yorke, Durham, and Winchester, the dignities of Lord Cardinall, Legate, and Chancellor: the Abbey of St. Albans, diverse Prioryes, sundry fat Benefices in Commendam: a great preferrer of his servants, advauncer of learning, stoute in every quarrell, never happy till his overthrow. Therein he shewed such moderation and ended so patiently that the houre of his death did him more honour than all the pompe of life passed." *

Gentlemen, I know a number of points are here opened for discussion, or at least investigation. Why should Shakspeare have copied? That he should have taken up old plays to arrange anew for the convenience of his theatre, is easily understood. But that in his great play of Henry VIII., the quiet and mellowed production of his age, that he who was so rich should have transplanted a character of Wolsey as he has done—why was this? What manner of man was the wonderful William Shakspeare? And why amongst all mankind did William Shakspeare copy from Edmund Campion? Was Shakspeare, as some have thought, an adherent of the old faith? Had he, directly or indirectly, special intercourse with Jesuits or the books of Jesuits? Or rather, had he not sometime seen, in the library of the splendid Earl of Leicester

* "This cardinal Though from an humble stock undoubtedly Was fashioned to much honour from his cradle. He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one: Exceeding wise, fair spoken and persuading: Lofty and sour to them that loved him not, But to those men that sought him sweet as summer. And though he were unsatisfied in getting (Which was a sin), yet in bestowing, madam, He was most princely: ever witness for him Those twins of learning that he raised in you, Ipswich and Oxford! one of which fell with him, Unwilling to outlive the good that did it; The other, though unfinished, yet so famous, So excellent in art, and still so rising, That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue. His overthrow heaped happiness upon him; For then, and not till then, he felt himself, And found the blessedness of being little: And to add greater honours to his age Than man could give him, he died fearing God."

at Kenilworth, the little tract which Campion wrote on Ireland and dedicated to that very nobleman, the favourite of Elizabeth, the patron for some short time of Edmund Campion? Was it not there that Shakspeare's keen eyes noted this very passage?* Did not that same bold arm which once, it is said, laid low Justice Lucy's deer, seize without hesitation on the obscure Irish tract, that might suit the dramatist's purpose? But was not that purpose rather an unselfish than a wholly vulgar and ambitious one? Did not the wild, glorious Will, careless of his own fame, think more of improving his drama than his reputation? May he not have sought rather to make Henry VIII. a fine play, than to gain for William Shakspeare a great name? These are questions, Gentlemen, that I leave to you to settle—during the holidays. They are very interesting—if indeed it were only possible to answer them. But with them I have nothing to do. My subject is Eloquence, and connected with Eloquence, I have here only two points to urge, First, that the splendid little gem of Eloquence before us, is found in Campion: Secondly, that Shakspeare, after having seized on this Eloquence, took most remarkable pains to make it suit his purpose.

In the first place, Gentlemen, the eloquent description of Wolsey's character is found in Campion; that is, in one whose name has scarcely found a place in the annals of literature. That name, indeed, has long been dear to Jesuits and to Catholics; it is a missionary's and a martyr's name, the name of one of the noblest heroes of this earth; a name which there is, at this moment, hope to see solemnly pronounced Blessed by the Church. But on the praise of Campion I have not now to dwell. How his talents and acquirements early gained for him position and respect at the University of Oxford; how it was his, when Queen Elizabeth visited the great seat of learning, to be a spokesman to her majesty; how graciously the sovereign received his address and commended him to the protection of the Earl of Leicester; how kindly Leicester took him up; what a prospect of gradually increasing prosperity, and gradually rising

On the other hand, if, as is stated, Campion's MS. was found in the Cottonian Library, it may well indeed have come from Kenilworth. It would certainly not

Library, it may went indeed have come from Kenniworth. It would certainly not have been the only volume among Cotton's books proceeding from the House of Leicester, as poor Sir Robert knew unfortunately to his cost.

Many, however, will think that Shakspeare read Campion's character of Wolsey, not in manuscript, but in print. In the second volume of Holinshed, printed in 1587, we find at page 917, Campion's character of Wolsey given in full, as taken from "Campion in his History of Ireland." In 1587 Shakspeare was only twenty-three years of age three years of age.

^{*} No supposition of very immediate intercourse with Campion seems likely to yield here the satisfactory explanation. Even if Father Edmund himself did specially treat with John Shakspeare at Stratford-on-Avon, it will scarcely be supposed that he communicated his History of Ireland to the Alderman, who it is feared had never learned to read and write.

fame, was before him in his early manhood; how a lion came to stand in his path; how the awful thought of Eternal Truth and Eternal Salvation arose before him; how he, like many converts in our own day, felt that he could no longer rest in Oxford, nor in any belief that Oxford tolerated; how he went forth from the old place and from the new Church, to be what he had been in his childhood, a Catholic of the old stamp, obedient on the old terms to the Roman Pontiff and his Apostolic See; how things went harder with the neophyte than has been the case with the noble converts of our own time; how he sought a refuge in Ireland, and had to flee from it in disguise within a year; how he escaped with strange adventures by sea and land; how he laboured as a Jesuit for some years abroad, and at last at home; how he was arrested and tortured cruelly, and still more cruelly deceived; how for a time his name was in all men's mouths; to what an extent the curiosity of that stern queen herself, who had once marked him for favour in his youth, was roused by the Jesuit's strange fame; how magnanimously he bore himself at trial; how undauntedly he met his doom; -all this is a history which does not concern us here. I believe, indeed, no more interesting book could be written than one which should recount faithfully and fully the chequered life of Edmund Campion. The Flanders and Moravia, the Prague and Dublin and Vienna, the Oxford and Geneva, the Rome and London, the English sea-coasts and the English manorhouses of the sixteenth century would all find there their place and their description: wonderful scenes of religious controversy, of hiding-places, of disguises, of escapes, of joyful and perilous meetings, of treachery and ferocious persecution, of unflinching fidelity and faith, would abound in the pages that told Campion's story. But our point is, that this man made no mark in the world of letters, and yet had in him a wonderful gift of Eloquence; that we have here a striking example of Eloquence. apart from all oratory and literary success; that it is clear that this glorious element of literary beauty and power is to be met with outside great orators and famous works. point is plain and certain. Should any one wish to insist on something more, I shall make no resistance. If any one maintains that Edmund Campion possessed great literary talents in many ways, I will confess that I thoroughly share in that opinion. I believe his little history of Ireland contains abundant evidence of high and varied natural talent for letters. But all this would only go to prove that not Eloquence alone, but literary talent in general, is more widely diffused than the annals of literature itself would show. From that doctrine I by no means dissent. I have no quarrel whatever with the view of life so beautifully put forward in Gray's "Elegy in a

Country Churchyard." I believe indeed that great talents are more common than is commonly supposed. But I am not concerned with that whole question now. My subject to-night is Eloquence, and Eloquence alone. And for Eloquence I venture to think that the illustration I have brought forward is striking and decisive.

But, Gentlemen, I have a second great point to deal with, as illustrated here. While, on the one hand, the element of Eloquence is widely diffused; on the other hand, the use, the proper application of it, calls for a great deal of patient labour and enlightened study; and this second point must be shown you, brilliantly illustrated by Shakspeare's example

with regard to Campion's Eloquence.

At first, Gentlemen, we might be inclined to think that the direct contrary of what I want to show was illustrated here; that Shakspeare's way of dealing with what he took from Campion showed that one had only to find luckily and boldly take. For there is little change of what Campion said, in Shakspeare. There were, of course, some evident alterations to be made; these were made by Shakspeare, but would have been made by any one with ease. Campion's character was' meant as a complete one of the Cardinal. In Shakspeare, Griffith is made ask leave merely to "speak his good."* Reference is indeed made to faults of the Cardinal by Griffith, but made most tenderly. He has undertaken to "speak his good." The strongly unfavourable expressions of Campion, as "thrall to affections," "full of revenge," and the long list of the Cardinal's preferments, naturally find no place in Griffith's speech. Instead of the long list, we are simply told that Wolsey "was unsatisfied in getting, which was a sin." But these are easy and obvious alterations. But, on the other hand, what is in Griffith's speech with regard to Wolsey's character, is almost all from Campion, in words, Gentlemen, no less than sentiment; touched indeed anew by the great master, but surely, delicately and sparingly touched, even by that marvellous and mighty hand! Shakspeare seems here to have been almost himself afraid of painting the lily and gilding refined gold! All this is undoubtedly true, Gentlemen, but there is more behind.

It is undoubtedly true that the changes Shakspeare has made are very slight, but, at the same time, they are very subtle, and testify, by their very delicacy, to deep and accurate thought. If we examine Shakspeare's handiwork carefully, we shall find that he has made a radical change in the order of presenting the ideas, in order to adapt the passage to his work: we shall find he has, for the same purpose, remarkably

^{*}In Queen Catherine's speech just preceding, there are expressions which will seem to many suggested by the very passages in Campion which Griffith's appeal omits.

toned down something that in Campion was very brilliant, and gloriously illustrated a portion which in Campion was more subdued. The dramatist *cogged* no doubt. That old Shaksperian word is not likely ever to grow completely obsolete in Colleges. He cogged, but he cogged like a genius as he was, not like a brainless schoolboy. He cogged, but his very cogging seems to have cost him more labour than original composition costs ordi-Campion starts with a view of Wolsey's character and spirit. Shakspeare begins by calling attention to Wolsey's studies and the gradual development of his talents and his fortune. For Campion supposes at the outset that the great Cardinal was secretly of princely birth, "no butcher's son." For Campion, therefore, it was most natural, in consequence, to dwell at once on the lofty spirit and natural endowments of the high-born boy, calling him exceeding wise, fair-spoken, high-minded; and, passing on, to point out later his development as a ripe schoolman, and a prince-like patron of learning. But this would not do for Shakspeare. He was putting into oratorical form the eloquent description of character, which he had found as an historical observation or note in Campion. He was turning it into the earnest and pathetic pleading of Griffith, addressed to Catherine. It would not soothe the wounded feelings of the daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic to be told that the man she blamed was a kind of prince whom she would have contemned; much less would it have softened her to hear that such a petty princeling had naturally a lofty temper. Shakspeare knew that a woman like the queen, was to be won over otherwise. So he presents Wolsey to her as the poor scholar, whose high qualifications had gradually raised him to his place among the great ones of the land. Shakspeare avoids all question, in Griffith's mouth, of Wolsey's being sprung from any other than humble stock. He avoids it so anxiously, that he makes us almost feel he was seeking to avoid it. Griffith is made begin by declaring that Wolsey's birth was low:

"This Cardinal
Though from an humble stock undoubtedly
Was fashioned to much honour from his cradle."

Editors, ignorant of what Campion wrote and Shakspeare read, do, I believe, very generally make the "undoubtedly" relate to the line that follows it. For my part I am inclined to think it was meant to refer to the words about "humble stock," in its own line. I can understand Shakspeare, with the idea of a different stock before his eyes, commencing by disclaiming it, even too solemnly and strongly. In the other sense, referring the word "undoubtedly" to the fashioning to much honour, the expression has always appeared to me most unnecessary. The proof of Wolsey's fashioning follows

clearly in Griffith's speech. There is no need to preface proof by a negation of all doubt. If people were ignorant, however, of the doubt raised as to Wolsey's parentage, they would apply an objection of this kind to what is in the first line too, and say there is still less room there for vehement asseveration. But, as we see, this is not the case. Nevertheless, I must candidly admit, that as the word "undoubtedly" occurs in Campion with regard to Wolsey's destination to great honour, and as Shakspeare admits that destination, though not in the same way, he may be supposed to have coupled with it this very word "undoubtedly," which he certainly found referred to it in Campion.

Be this detail as it may, at all events Shakspeare begins, quite unlike Campion, with the supposition that Wolsey was of lowly birth. He cannot, in consequence, proceed at once, like Campion, to describe the Cardinal's lofty spirit, as what might be at first expected. Campion called Wolsey "undoubtedly born to honour." Shakspeare has here to change a word. He calls Wolsey, not "born," but "fashioned to much honour from his cradle." In short, Shakspeare has now to trace the fashioning to honour of a low-born boy, and he proceeds to describe him rising, through

his talents, with his training:

"He was a scholar, and a ripe and good one."

Next comes the

"Exceeding wise, fair-spoken,"

of Campion himself.

But the "high-minded," which follows immediately in Campion's description of the prince's son, the man born to honour, does not appear here in the narrative of the rise of the humble scholar. Shakspeare chooses a better word to serve his peculiar purpose. Griffith's Wolsey is

"Exceeding wise, fair-spoken, and persuading."

And, now, Gentlemen, we come to what is, in my opinion, most highly characteristic. We shall now find Shakspeare actually lessening beauties that are in Campion, toning them down wisely, to suit his end.

Shakspeare has:

"Lofty and sour to them that loved him not, But to those men that sought him, sweet as summer."

Campion had:

"Lofty to his enemies were they never so big, to those that accepted and sought his friendship wonderful courteous."

I think it impossible to deny that there is something

grander and more princelike in the description Campion gives. The man who was "lofty to his enemies were they never so big," was surely a finer and more royal figure than the man who was

"Lofty and sour to them that loved him not."

Campion's Wolsey is every inch a prince. There is really an idea of condescension and high courtly bearing in the expressions: "to those that accepted and sought his friendship wonderful courteous," which is not to be found in Shakspeare's

"But to those men that sought him sweet as summer."

But Shakspeare's "Lofty and sour to them that loved him not," is a very portrait of a sensitive and aspiring poor scholar. His effusive "Sweet as summer," is a picture of such a one's deep-felt gratitude. He has set a new form before us instead of the prince's son, and Shakspeare animates this new form thoroughly. He completely tones down the loftier language of Campion, which suited splendidly the supposed child of lofty birth, but which would have been certainly out of place in the description of the rise of the poor scholar. The great poet, Gentlemen, did his cogging very judiciously.

We shall now see him show his judgment in another way; not by toning down, but by improving, when it suits his purpose, what Campion said before him. Wolsey has at last grown great in Griffith's description; and magnificent language like Campion's, and more magnificent still, will suit

him now. He is now

"In bestowing, madam, most princely,"

just as Campion said he was "prince-like in bestowing."

He is no longer the rising scholar. Shakspeare may now speak of him as a very prince. Now Shakspeare will put forth his power, and will outdo and outshine his model. He is writing poetry, and Campion wrote only prose. He keeps steadily in the same direction as Campion, but he soars above him. He takes Campion's fine account, no other, of the Colleges at Ipswich and at Oxford; it ran in rich, high-sounding, and yet plain prose, thus:

"His two colleges at Ipswich and at Oxenford, th' one suppressed with his fall, th' other unfinished, and yet as it lieth an house of students (considering all appurtenances) incomparable through Christendom."

Shakspeare turned this into the beautiful and highly ornamented verses—

"Ever witness for him Those twins of learning that he raised in you, Ipswich and Oxford! one of which fell with him, Unwilling to outlive the good that did it; The other though unfinished yet so famous, So excellent in art and still so rising That Christendom shall ever speak his virtue."

Campion closed his description very quietly. He was bound to subside. He was returning from a digression to the main course of his narrative; so he gave a short recapitulation of what he had said, as follows:

"A great preferrer of his servants, advancer of learning, stout in every quarrel."

And then he added:

"Never happy till his overthrow. Therein he showed such moderation and ended so patiently that the hour of his death did him more honour than all the pomp of life passed."

But Shakspeare required something different from this. He was not winding up, like Campion, to enter on a different kind of subject. He was not writing a short dissertation in a history. He was making a pathetic appeal in a dialogue. He would use at the close, the most glowing and solemn language that he could.

For Campion's "Never happy till his overthrow," the

great poet wrote:

"His overthrow heaped happiness upon him."

For Campion's "moderation" Shakspeare gives us:

"The blessedness of being little."

Instead of Campion's "did him more honour than all the pomp of life passed," Shakspeare wrote the exquisite lines:

"And to add greater honours to his age
Than man could give him;"

and he concluded with those words of deepest meaning, in their strong antithesis to all earthly glory,

"He died fearing God."

I ought, I believe, to apologise for having detained you so long on the subject of these passages. But I thought that they must interest us all. That English language, which of all men Shakspeare spoke best, which Father Edmund Campion too spoke worthily, is for all of us our mother-tongue; our Country is the Country of which Edmund Campion wrote, our Faith is the Faith for which Edmund Campion died; and we are, all of us, passing some of the best years of our life in a college of the Society for which he abandoned every hope of earth.

And in truth, Gentlemen, it is useful to us for our own immediate objects to-night, to observe as we have done, how thorough, how careful, how judicious, was Shakspeare's copying. I believe the evidence of his peculiar care to make the most of what he found in Campion, would astonish many, would give to many a thoroughly new idea of what Shakspeare really was. It is, most surely, a glimpse of the real I hardly doubt, moreover, that if the literature of Shakspeare's times, the books and manuscripts that then existed, were more carefully studied, new light would be thrown on his tastes and ways, his opportunities of reading, his judgment in selection, his industry and his cast of thought. But what interests us and must interest us most deeply tonight, is that, with all his extraordinary genius, his industry was so painstaking, so calculating, so studious of consistency, so careful of the slightest details in expression; so careful when Eloquence was at hand, to adapt it thoroughly to the Oratory in which it was to shine. This illustrates indeed, Gentlemen, the point I was endeavouring to urge most strongly upon you; that it behoves you to cultivate your Eloquence with an anxious and almost painful care, if you really mean it to set its glorious stamp upon your

Oratory.

Gentlemen, the proper development of natural talent is no slight or easy work. Few bring to ripeness the intellectual gifts they have received. It was Dr. Johnson that asked, was it not? what becomes of all the clever schoolboys. How is it, that so few in later years have done anything for letters worthy of the rich promise of their early prime? For some indeed, as for Edmund Campion, the answer is to be given, that they found something better and higher to do, and that at the call of duty or of heroism, they abandoned the hopes of genius and of fame. For others, the answer is to be found in circumstances which were independent of them. But for many, the answer must be, not that they ought not, or that they could not, but that they would not when they both could and might; not that they had anything better to do, but that they made out something worse. Many clever schoolboys have become insignificant men, merely because they had not application and perseverance; because they would suffer the evil that was in them to grow, rather than develop the good; because rather than gain a mastery over the high powers which they had from God, they preferred to let idleness and carelessness establish their tyranny over splendid intellects and generous dispositions. In various degrees, in various departments of intellectual life, the world has witnessed this. Not least of all, in what interests us specially here, the field of Oratory. Many who were nobly

gifted with real Eloquence, from neglect of the necessary training, and study, and pains, and patience, have never succeeded as they might have done in Oratory, where Eloquence is of most avail.

I believe this is a point which should come home to us in a very peculiar manner. Irish Eloquence is a term very often used. And it is applied sometimes in a sense not wholly complimentary. It has been taken to signify a kind of Oratory, brilliant indeed and touchingly impressive, yet strained and forced beyond the limits of good taste. has always been fully recognised, that there is on it the stamp of genius. It has been often maintained, that its evident marks of genius have been to some degree disfigured, from want of a severer and more critical judgment. Gentlemen, the great distinguishing mark of talent in Irish Oratory has certainly been Eloquence. We are sometimes told it has been Poetry, the offspring of a brilliant imagination. But, Gentlemen, that is not the case. It is only from confounding the peculiar nature of Poetry with that of Eloquence, the images founded on the experience of the senses, with the lofty sentiments which transcend it, that the glorious characteristic of Irish speeches has been described as a kind of Poetry. To tell the truth, Gentlemen, though our countrymen have done their part in English Poetry, I do not see, that, compared with their neighbours, they can be said to have done It would seem strange that it should be so, if Poetry were so very marked a characteristic of our mind. In Oratory, Irishmen have contributed far more than their share to the enduring monuments of English Literature; and what they have done here, is marked, not universally indeed, but still generally, with a characteristic which forms their glory; the deep and penetrating and sympathetic sense for virtue and moral worth, for what is good and honourable and lofty. That this feeling was strong and enthusiastic in this country, was attested long ago by striking evidence. Before Sir John Davies, under King James, bore his well-known testimony to Irishmen's love of justice, even against themselves, Edmund Campion had borne still stronger witness with the less well known words: "The same being virtuously bred up or reformed, are such mirrors of holinesse and austeritie that other nations retain but a shewe or shadow of devotion in comparison of them."

We know, ourselves, Gentlemen, that in our dealings with one another, we can count strongly upon this feeling of enthusiasm for what is honourable and right. We know how often amongst ourselves the motives of expediency are feeble beside those of honour. For my own part, treating with you, this spirit has often made me call for disinterested sacrifice,

and has caused me not to be disappointed. It is this spirit which has set its mark, not universally, I say again, but still in a general and characteristic manner, on the noblest efforts of the noblest minds amongst our countrymen. That generous enthusiasm which we all feel strongly, many of us have had a singular power to express. This it is, not Poetry, which forms the one peculiar common charm of Irish Oratory, from the magnificent orations of Burke, and the glorious harangues of Grattan, down to the speeches, in our own day, of Lord O'Hagan and Chief Justice Whiteside, of Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Butt. Not Poetry, Gentlemen, not imagery, though that too may be found, it is not that which is the one grand predominant feature in those noble compositions. If any one of you imagines that he will most closely copy the excellencies of Irish orators by indulging in metaphors and figures of all kinds of thought and speech, that gentleman is very much deceived. It is not, in Irish orations, the play of fancy, the pictures of the imagination, that impart to them their main power, their great charm. It is the mighty appeal to what is best and noblest in ourselves, to the eternal sense of rectitude in Man, to stainless honour and generous fair play, to unyielding courage and unfailing faith. It is the sympathy with great natures, roused in us by these appeals, be they made directly or indirectly, that constitutes the real charm of what is known as Irish Eloquence.

Nay, Gentlemen, I believe I might almost venture farther as a critic. I believe that while this true Eloquence is the strong part of our Oratory, its weakness lies, to no inconsiderable extent, in what approaches to the nature of Poetry. I believe that many passages in Sheridan, for instance, that on the whole are admirable, are so, not on account of the figures with which they abound, but in spite of them; and that a general strain of manly and noble feeling which pervades those passages has cast a halo not their own around the images there found. This is unquestionably the case with regard to Curran's celebrated apostrophe to Lord Avonmore in court, over which Jeffrey and Philips fought. The figures there are of course all wrong; the Scotch reviewer was clearly right so far. And yet the passage which moved Lord Avonmore so deeply on the Bench, has continued, in spite of criticism, to touch men still. For it is conceived in the very spirit of an appeal to the noblest sentiments of our nature, and, in spite of rhetorical errors, that appeal is feelingly expressed. Eloquence exerts its power here. And, to tell the whole truth, I think it has often done so in our poets too. I think a great deal that is admirable in our poets is admirable from eloquent rather than poetic beauty. Goldsmith charms us still more by the honest

sympathy with which he fills our hearts for men, than by the power with which he pictures them and things. And Moore, the bard who fled

"To the bowers Where pleasure lies carelessly smiling at fame,"

Who was born for much more, and in happier hours, whose soul might have burned with a holier flame; he was surely at his best when a glorious vista did gleam, and he made men mark how he too could nobly feel. If the passages in these two great poets of Ireland which refer to high and virtuous sentiment were lost, I believe the great beauty of their writings would disappear. This would not be commonly the case with poets; scarcely, I think, with Milton himself; certainly not with Scott. In both Moore and Goldsmith, I think their picturing is inferior to their power of touching, sometimes with a master's hand, the best chords of the heart. Eloquence, Gentlemen, is indeed one of the gifts of Nature to our Nation. I am sure it has been liberally bestowed on you. But, as I have already hinted, the very term "Irish Eloquence" must remind us, that that great gift alone is not sufficient; that patience and training, judgment and study, are imperatively

required too.

Addressing you, therefore, Gentlemen, as I have the best right to do to-night, not as critics, but as boys who are to strive now, that they may if possible be speakers when they are men; I call on you specially, in your speeches, beyond all rhetorical figures, and all poetic imagery, to cultivate the precious element of real Eloquence. It is the truest ornament and greatest power of speech. It is the ornament and power for which we can look amongst you, with the most lively confidence. But it is a gem which, to produce its full effect, must be set splendidly; and whatever Eloquence God may have given to you, you will never make it shine as fully as you ought, without much study and much practice. Gentlemen, do your best. Already many of those who once held your places here, are called to that great Senate, with which, as with the Agora of Athens and the Roman Forum in the days of old, the name and power of Eloquence in our own time are intimately entwined. See, Gentlemen, that when in your turn, you are called to fill those places which old Clongowes' scholars occupy to-day, you may be ready to do so as becomes yourselves and as becomes your Country. Strive all to do your best. It may be indeed that some may be turned aside from a path of fame to walk a more glorious way; that others may be prevented, by unfavourable circumstances of various kinds, from exercising ever on any great scale the power of Eloquence; that some may discover truly that, even in the

most favourable circumstances in the world, they never could have Eloquence of a high order to display. But those who here and elsewhere do their best, have one triumph—the greatest of all, of which no adverse circumstances can deprive them, with which no heroic call of duty can interfere—the consciousness that in nobly doing their best they have done that very thing which it is Eloquence to be able even to describe.

APPENDIX.

NOTE ON CAMPION AND SHAKSPEARE'S CHARACTER OF WOLSEY.

The point in which Shakspeare's wording of this character differs most from Campion's own, is perhaps where Wolsey's Colleges at Ipswich and at Oxford are declared to "witness." This fine expression is, it appears, to be found in Campion, in immediate connection with the subject of these two colleges. In Mr. Simpson's Life of Campion, published by Messrs. Williams and Norgate in 1867, we read at page 9: "That at Ipswich" (says Campion) "was destroyed by Henry. The other at Oxford is without comparison grander than any college in Europe, and endowed with an income of about £3,000. At the present day Henry is called its founder, simply because he did not upset it and confiscate its revenues after the Cardinal's death. Witness the verses carved in great letters over the entrance when Elizabeth made her visit," &c. For this quotation, Mr. Simpson refers us to "Campion, Narratio Divort. Hen. VIII." It might really be well worth while to study, in connection with Shakspeare, the more strictly Catholic literature of his period.

With regard to Campion's Irish History itself, Mr. Simpson makes the following

interesting observation at page 35:

"The most striking thing about the book is the vast dramatic power of the speeches which he introduces, according to the custom of the historians of his day. The taste which we have here is sufficient to make us regret both that the tragedies which he afterwards produced at Prague were written in Latin, and that they are lost. Some of his orations only want metre to be comparable with those of his great dramatic contemporaries."

And at page 37:

"If have thought it worth while to give these specimens of an eloquence that succeeded beyond that of all contemporary rivals in transfusing the vigour and polish of Cicero into a language that was only struggling into form. Campion's fame in England was built upon his eloquence; and it is only by the speeches of this Irish History, which his scholar Stanihurst calls 'tickle-tongued,' because its author 'did learn it to speak,' and by the report of his defence at his trial, that we can estimate a power which appears to have swayed all who listened to him.'



